STPI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the the Government of Orissa in the year 2005 to set up another centre in Berhampur.

As per the Government of Orissa, the above three cities *viz.* Bhubaneswar, Rourkela and Berhampur have been identified as major IT hubs of the State.

VSNL's partnership with South Africa

†3503. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd., a Central Government Undertaking is planning to start its operations by entering into a partnership in land line communication project in South Africa; and

(b) if so, the details of the countries with which Corporation has entered into agreements during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. has reported that it has signed a Shareholders Agreement to have 51% stake in second fixed line operator of South Africa and has not entered into any other such agreement during the last three years. However, Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. is no more a Central Government Undertaking since 13th February, 2002.

Revolution in Telecom Industry

3504. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to bear the cost of Rs. 1,000 crores for providing more spectrum to the Telecommunication industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are considering to make second revolution in telecom industry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Government is to bear the cost of providing alternate communication facility for some of the existing wireless networks for the release of more spectrum to the telecommunication industry.

(c) and (d) The telecome sector is evolving at a fast pace. The growth of the telephone connections has been about 42% in the year 2005-2006 It is targeted to achieve 250 million telephone connections by end of year 2007.

Release of Commemorative Stamp

†3505. SHRIMATI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to release a postal stamp on completion of fifty glorious years of Mumbai University;

(b) whether Government have received any suggestions in this regard from State Government, University and people's representatives; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and Government's opinion in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No such proposal has been received by the Department so far.

(c) Generally stamps are issued on receipt of proposals from the proponents. It may be mentioned here that a set of three commemorative postage stamps on "Centenary of Universities", one each on Bombay, Calcutta and Madras Universities have already been issued on

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.